

## BABES ALL BOYS IN FLATBUSH

CROP OF MALE INFANTS FOLLOWS LONG PEANUT SPREE.

Everybody There Ate Them Before Director Smith Discovers the Effect of Hydrocarbons in Determining the Sex.

The Shakespeare Club is now kicking. When the peanut party became popular in Flatbush society last summer and fall, Director Smith of the Central Park Zoo had not yet made his revolutionary discovery as to the effect of hydrocarbons in determining sex. Else it might have been different.

Although there is a difference of opinion on this point of history, it is the general opinion that the Mothers' Club appropriately started it. Last year, along in June, just when Flatbush society was getting active with its summer campaign, the Mothers gave a peanut lawn party. Peanut ice cream was served in paper mache imitations of peanut shells. The Japanese paper napkins had a peanut design. There were peanut waffles and peanut butter sandwiches. It was one of the most brilliant social functions ever held in Flatbush, and netted \$25.70 for the purposes of the Mothers' Club.

You just can't stop a thing of that kind when it gets going. The idea was so silly and novel that it supplanted crokinole and progressive authors and mum socials as a form of diversion for church and educational functions. It lasted away into the fall and winter.

The Epworth League's peanut party for the missionary fund eclipsed in interest even the autumn croquet championships. The piece de resistance on their bill of fare was the peanut fudge; a popular elocutionist recited "Uncle Rastus and the Peanuts" and gave a strikingly amusing impersonation of an Italian peanut man; the members of the club were seen in a very pretty and instructive series of tableaux, representing the course of a peanut from its planting to its sale from a pushcart.

Next the Shakespeare club gave a peanut afternoon, with papers on the growth and cultivation of peanuts. There was a debate on the question, "Are peanuts indigestible?" The brides' cooking class devoted two weeks to the study of peanut canities.

The public mind was on the subject and the consumption of peanuts grew apace. The number of pushcart men handling the prize product of Georgia (double and trebled) children and their mothers, who served peanut desserts at luncheon and dinner. The autumn and spring steeple parties on the front porches of Flatbush gossiped and sparked over sacks of peanuts, until the sidewalks in the morning looked like Coney Island after a hard Sunday.

Director Smith had not yet spoken: Flatbush was impregnating its system with hydrocarbons in utter ignorance of a great, but as yet unexplored, scientific truth.

Well, spring broke, and the population of Flatbush went right on increasing. Yet as early as March doctors, clergymen, neighborhood gossips and others who notice such things began to mark a strange fact. They were all boys.

In one week of early March five citizens of Flatbush, popular in church and women's club circles, passed their earlier floor and swung their hands; and to them appeared five nurses who said:

"Doing nicely, sir, and it's a fine little boy."

About the same thing happened along further Flatbush avenue. In two or three days the doctors took to stopping their harpocrates as they passed one another, and talking across the wheels in low, excited tones.

"Certainly, sir, all they would say before they drove on."

March 4 came, the day of President Roosevelt's inauguration, and the doctors and gossips and people who believed in signs said that Flatbush ought to make a boy record for itself that day. By a perverse stroke of fate, only two babies were reported to the gossips on that day—both girls. They were named Theodora. And everybody said that was just an accident about those boys; things happen that way sometimes.

Next day the score jumped back and since then it has seemed to rain boys in Flatbush. Hod carrier and merchant prince, bartender and clergyman, Judge and cop—they are all boys for theirs. Now and then a little girl came by way of variety. In every single case it was found that the parents of the girl babies, crop of the spring of 1905, were refugees from church and women's club society. Even before the great discovery of Director Smith, the district gossips noticed that fact and commented on it.

Then, on May day, Director Smith announced through THE SUN his discovery. The Central Park zoo had been scoring only male calves and ewes and especially baby monkeys. And Director Smith found that it was due to a diet of hydrocarbons, which was the cause of peanuts. A wave of self-revelation swept over Flatbush. A certain house there came a frantic call for peanuts; from before certain others, Italian hot peanut men were driven with clubs and reproaches.

Alderman John Hann, who represents Flatbush in the City Council, was wiping off the rubber plant on his stoop in Park Place last Monday evening. He was told that a delegation of ladies wanted to see him. He showed them into his study and turned up the student lamp. He recognized the president of the Shakespeare Club, and members of the executive committee of the Mothers' Club, and the Brides' Cooking Class, together with prominent church workers.

"It's about the boy babies we've come," said the president of the Shakespeare Club, who acted as spokesman.

"Oh, yes, 'The Little Babes'! Well, I'm sure the mothers of Flatbush must be glad to have so many fine sons," said the Alderman, taking the wrong tack.

The president of the Shakespeare Club cut in abruptly:

"It is not a question of personal gratification, Mr. Hann. It is a question of principle—all the other delegates nodded at this—"is our sex to be extinguished in Flatbush? Are we, after creating an atmosphere of feminine refinement and culture, to have it destroyed in the next generation because there are none but alien women for our sons to marry?"

"Beside, girl babies are so cute," said the delegate from the Brides' Cooking Class. The president of the Shakespeare Club crushed her with one look.

"And so," she went on, "our clubs have met and made up a law, which we want you to get passed at the very next meeting of the Aldermen. Our legal committee has drawn it up. I am certain that it is perfect."

## NEW BOOKS.

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Along With the Great Alexander. The reader will follow with eager interest the adventures of the three companions in Robert H. Fuller's story of "The Golden Hope" (The Macmillan Company). The title here is hardly an assurance of the vigorous contents of the book. Golden is no longer the effective adjective that it once was, and that it flies somewhat impudently in the face of facts.

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There is a fine chapter about Alexander at that point in his career where he sent the Gordian knot. Mounted on Bucephalus, he rode slowly along the ranks of his army, splendid in his armor, his double plume of white brushing his shoulders on either side, just as he had done before the charge at the Granicus. The chief priest read to him the conditions concerning the knot by which the cart of King Gordius had been made fast to the porphyry column in the temple. Alexander regarded the knot. He saw that King Gordius had left no ends. His strong common sense assisted him. It must be that he asked himself what was the use trying to save the rope. He whipped out his sword and cut the knot. The chief priest hailed him lord of Asia. The army acclaimed him with joyous cries. Hellenism had already fallen. Issues was to follow, and the fall of Tyre.

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The story carries us to Tyre, where the ironed Moloch, full of hot coils, is knotted over by a stone cast from a Macedonian ballista just as he is about to take the heroine in his dreadful embrace. An eventful, stirring, well told tale. We recommend it.

Real Light on China.

It is no light reading that Mr. T. R. Jernigan offers in "China in Law and Commerce" (Macmillan), but the reader who will take the pains to master the book will learn much about China that he can find in any other book. The book is a real light on China. It is the first place the author does not look upon the Chinese as ethnographical curiosities or as people who must be reformed or changed. He looks on them objectively, as people who must be dealt with according to the facts. He knows a great deal about China, and he tells what he knows in a way that will be helpful to every one who intends to deal in any way with the country or the people. He has written a really valuable book.

After introductory chapters describing the physical geography and the government of the country, Mr. Jernigan gives us an exposition of Chinese law. It is a condensation rather than a digest, and will astonish Western readers probably by the revelation that in many essentials a Chinaman's ideas of justice are the same as ours. This is followed by an enlightening account of Chinese business organizations and business methods and by descriptions of means of communication by land and water. There is no criticism in all this; it is a statement of facts, with clear explanations of why they are.

The book is packed with concise, important and practical information. We have rarely come across one that could instruct better in the ways of a strange civilization than this who are willing to learn.

Immigration.

It is not the United States alone that has to deal with the problems that have arisen of late years out of increase in immigration. England is perplexed over the numbers and the quality of the newcomers, and so in a less degree are France and Germany, while all the European countries are troubled by emigration of their people. Mr. James Davenport Whelpley has compiled with great labor a book that might be consulted in any rational discussion of the subject, "The Problem of the Immigrant" (E. P. Dutton & Co.).

The title disguises somewhat the character of the book. While the first two chapters, reprints of review articles, discuss the general subject, the bulk of the book consists of statements of conditions in each country and of a summary of the legislation in each in the matter of immigration. The United States, naturally, has the chief share of the author's attention, but the chief countries of Europe are duly noticed. From an American point of view it might be wished that Italy had been treated as fully as other lands. As it is Mr. Whelpley's volume contains much information which it will be difficult to find elsewhere.

Other Books.

Sleeping on their steep hillsides the picturesque towns of Tuscany and Umbria seem to the sightseers and artists who visit them never to have been alive, and Perugia is perhaps as dead as any of them. Her narrow streets, however, have had their share of fighting and bloodshed, and a vivid picture of Renaissance violence and savagery is shown in "Chronicle of the City of Perugia, 1492-1503," by Francesco Martorano, who Mr. Edward Strachan Morgan has translated. (J. M. Dent & Co.; E. P. Dutton & Co.) It is strange to think that while Columbus was discovering America and opening a new chapter in the world's history, Cesare Borgia was perpetrating his iniquities and the Baglioni were cutting

each other's throats for the edification of Perugia. It will do good to confirmed readers of modern historical novels to read this plain chonicle; they will find more gore spilled and more compressed villainy than their favorite authors can dilute in a dozen volumes.

A very delightful volume that is much more than a botanical handbook will be found in "Our Native Orchids," by William Hamilton Gibson and Helena Leeming Jelliffe (Doubleday, Page & Co.). It is a labor of piety on one author's part, but it is impossible to say how much belongs to one before his death had written a magazine article on orchids, had completed a hundred charming drawings, which are reproduced here, and had collected notes for the description of the various species. These have been worked up and put into shape by Miss Jelliffe, who adds a good deal of her own, for these are no formal botanical analyses, but pleasant, intelligible accounts of the plants, whose fascinating names are given. The range of these orchids is from North Carolina to Canada and west to the Mississippi.

Another lively story of true adventure, "The Journey of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca," is published in the "Trail Makers Series" (A. S. Barnes & Co.), translated by Fanny Bandler, with an introduction by Adolf F. Bandler. Though the geography of the narrative continues to be a puzzle for Americanists, the incredible hardships and strange adventures of the unfortunate travelers are always interesting. This is the third time that the story has been translated into English.

Gorgeous in beautiful print and illustrations from photographs is the volume on "Po's Past and Present," by T. P. Dale in the "Country Life" series of sporting books (George Newnes; Charles Scribner's Sons). It is a purely British product, describing the game and rules as played in England and India, with a very short historical sketch. America is touched upon very cursorily. Much in the book, however, is necessarily general and will prove of use and entertainment to American devotees of the sport.

Once more the Bible is triturated for the benefit of students in "Israel's History and Biographical Narratives," by Prof. Charles Foster Kent of Yale (Charles Scribner's Sons). The Bible accounts are presented in the revised version and attributed to the various sources about which the newer criticism has agreed. Where more than one account has been handed down parallel columns are used. The period covered is from Samuel through the Maccabees.

In view of the deluge of verse poured out in this little volume, the appearance of further aids to verification may be regretted. Mr. Andrew Loring has compiled "The Rhymers' Lexicon," which is much like other rimer dictionaries, and for which Prof. George Saintsbury provides a perfunctory and very unsatisfactory introduction (George Routledge & Sons; E. P. Dutton & Co.). Mr. Loring's part of the work might have been better if his ideas of accent and of the pronunciation of key words were not so eccentric. Many of the words he uses, too, are pure dictionary curiosities which may easily prove fatal to would-be poets. It seems to be a machine made book, on which intelligence has been used very sparingly.

It seems queer to start with the cell and metazoia in an account of the American Family (The University Publishing Society, New York), as Mr. Frank N. Hagar does, especially as it is a sociological problem. The author seems to have tried to put his reading on the subject of marriage and the family in methodical shape for his own satisfaction. There is much strange blending of metaphor with facts, but the author apparently agrees with the conclusion of children, Roosevelt as to the desirability of children.

In "The Real World," now republished in Macmillan's paper cover series, Mr. Robert Herrick has written a thoroughly workmanlike book. His hero may be somewhat of a prig, which is the fate of most heroes of fiction, but he has dissected one young woman very well. We are pained at the doings of the select set of Boston, but tales as unpleasant as those of Herrick tell us have been heard abroad by gossip. In the same series appears "The Celebrity," the amusing book that first attracted notice to Mr. Winston Churchill.

A little book of Japanese phrases, "Japanese for Daily Use," by E. P. Prentiss and Kametaro Sasamoto, is published by William R. Jenkins. We observe that the Japanese sentences are much longer than the English and that the author might be accused of somewhat of the meaning of the individual words.

The rather arbitrary selection of books in "How to Read and What to Read," by Mr. Sherwin Cody (The Old Greek Press, Chicago), would be more acceptable if the author's competence were better known. The reader will not be inclined in his favor by the rather flippant introductory essays by the fact that the list of selections mentioned to read volumes of selections that he has compiled. The book seems to be designed for those who have no time to read and may satisfy such persons. The lists are commonplace enough, but those who read all the books in them will have read much that is good and comparatively little that is trash.

Books Received.

"The Ethics of Force," H. E. Warner. (Ginn & Co.)

"In Response," William E. Raymond. (Ginn & Co.)

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At last the man was quiet, lying on the deck, with Dr. Carl Sturmee sitting on him and holding down his hands. The man had fought desperately. "Nobody had ever fought longer in Carl Sturmee's grip," however, and this man was not strong at heart.

This is the beginning of a 700 page book full of sociology. The second chapter takes us to Germany. We have a Schloss, and Kammernusker, and Gasts, and Hohels, and Durchlauchte. We are made acquainted here with the Prince of Edelstein, a comparatively penniless man, and with the Princess Amelia, his wife. Dr. Sturmee is here. The second chapter is antecedent to the first, and Dr. Carl has not yet sailed. There is reason to doubt and also reason to believe that the doctor is going to marry the daughter of the house of Edelstein. There is conversation. The doctor says "Isther Gotti" and "Meine Princessin" and "Gottlieb, Frau Princessin" and "Aber, lieber Gott!" and the Princess, episode of her "Gottlieb, Herr Prinz," and asks if the "Gottlieb Herr Doktor" is going to America. But the Prince Fritz does best in this chapter, according to our thinking. He says to Dr. Carl: "Gute Nacht, mein Grossvater. Du sollst einer von unsern Grossvater sein." This we venture to translate as "Good night, my venter. You shall be one of our grandfathers."

The remark of Prince Fritz is friendly, but not prophetic. The doctor came to America and became Governor of a Western State. The third chapter of the book is entitled "Problems." The fourth chapter is entitled "More Problems." We do not find that the problems cease with the fourth chapter.

At the tenth chapter we come to a symposium held in a "Settlement" in Delaney Street. The doctor is here introduced as "Mr. Boggs." Boggs read a paper, which is duly reported. A discussion followed. This is also reported. Another symposium is reported in the twelfth chapter, which runs from page 113 to page 136.

The sixteenth chapter is headed "Facilis." We cannot testify that we found it so. The seventeenth is headed "Decensus." Here the brakes were put on. The eighteenth chapter is headed "A Pause in the Brink," and the nineteenth "A Diversion." At the twentieth chapter we slide the rest of the way. "Averno" is the title.

Running from page 233 to page 241 we find the complete platform, constructed by himself, on which Dr. Sturmee stood when he was up for Governor. We were never more surprised than we were, after struggling with the platform, to find that he was elected. Our idea is that he was Governor of Kansas in an arid and unproductive season, though we do not pretend to be sure of this.

Though Boggs occurred in the early part of the book, we had not forgotten him when we came to the forty-fifth chapter, which is entitled "The Triumph of Boggs." The forty-sixth chapter bears the heading, "Two Bad Quarters of an Hour," but it strikes us that this is an understatement of time, and that it flies somewhat impudently in the face of facts.

Of the chapters called "Organization" and "Agitation" and "Law and Order," we forbore to speak. At page 658 we come to a chapter entitled "Where Hope Lies." We do not hesitate to pronounce this an apt title, for there is only one more chapter in the book.

There are great things in this tale. It is crowded with them indeed. We have Demosthenes in the fourth chapter stirring up the Athenians to opposition to Alexander. That great orator was hardly aware of his limitations at that time. Ariston, the rascally uncle of Clearchus, made a plot, as the habit was with too many of the ancient Greeks. Syphax the pirate carried off an Amazonian sweetheart of Clearchus. In consequence of this the fortune of Clearchus was left to the devious manipulation of his uncle. Even to these times the word "uncle" has maintained a dark significance.

We read of the overthrow of Thebes in the ninth chapter. In the chapter following we find one of our heroes, the gigantic Theban Chares, purchasing with all his fortune, and his mighty sword, all into the hands of the beautiful Athenian dancing girl Thais, celebrated at a later date by the distinguished English poet, John Dryden. Chares was a huge, handsome, unassuming person. In the eleventh chapter we read that he sat in the house of Thais in Athens idly watching the little motions of the lame leopard belonging to Thais as that animal worried an ivory ball. Thais lay on a couch